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Annual Report On State Employee Child Care Centers



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December 2005
State of Illinois
Department of Central Management Services
Paul J. Campbell, Acting Director

CMS

ILLINOIS

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Paul J. Campbell, Acting Director

January 2006

The Honorable Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor of Illinois
207 Statehouse
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Blagojevich:

I am pleased to submit the 2005 Annual Report on State Employee Child Care Centers. The State of Illinois continues its commitment to the care of employees' children through the operation of three on-site childcare centers located in Chicago, Springfield, and Kankakee. Each of these centers provides a valuable service and benefit to state employees.

Working parents are faced with the difficult task of finding quality childcare at an affordable cost. The State of Illinois remains committed to its employees by helping them meet their child care needs.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Campbell
Acting Director

by Anne M. Elson

The Department of Revenue Child Care by Bright Horizons Family Solutions

The center celebrated the 20th year at the Department of Revenue and it was Bright Horizons Family Solutions 11th year operating the center.

The teachers continue to build on the “World at Their Fingertips” curriculum, and adding a Junior Kindergarten program this year. Portfolios are maintained for each child to document their life at the center. Also, Documentation Boards are present showing educational experiences. The teachers continue to attend conferences and professional training days to further their growth.

Teacher Appreciation Month coordinated with the Parent Liaison Group was again a major success. This year the families honored the teachers with an evening out and awards ceremony with the theme being THANKS FOR HELPING OUR CHILDREN BLOOM.

The center also does service projects and this year collected items for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Some of our fellow



Bright Horizons Families were directly affected that lived and worked at a center in New Orleans.

State of Illinois Child Development Center

The State of Illinois Child Development Center celebrated its 13th successful year in September of 2005. The center is located in the Michael A. Bilandic Building at 160 N. LaSalle, which is located across the street from the James R. Thompson Center. Both buildings house State of Illinois employees. Early Child Care Services, Inc. (ECCS) manages the center. The center has been accredited for the 3rd time with the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The center is currently licensed for 78 children, but ECCS chooses to raise their standards by keeping the center filled at 66 children. There are 3 full time teachers for all 4 classrooms with the average room having 16 children. For most days, there is a 1:5 ratio in all rooms. Children ages two through kindergarten are provided full-time care. Priority enrollment is given to state employees' children. The center has been running to capacity for the last couple of years. When there is space available, there is also back-up care for individual days if the primary care giver is unable to care for the child. We are also pleased to say that we have not needed to replace a lead teacher in over 3 years. In 2004, we began taking in 6 and 7 year old students for a cultural summer program. Those children were able to take full advantage of the museums, libraries and special events that happen around Chicago. It was a huge success.

The center is beautiful with big rooms, a separate Discovery Room (designed by Kohl Children Museum) and a large outdoor playground located on the deck of the 21st floor. Dedicated and highly qualified early childhood teachers, who provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum, staff the center. The curriculum is based on the belief that the children learn

through play. The innovative curriculum includes whole language, "Math Their Way", science, social studies, art, music, movement, and computers. New this year is our inclusion of Spanish, which is being taught in all the rooms.

The children are growing and developing socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically during their time in the center. The staff provides high quality education in a safe and nurturing environment. This year we have added monthly "just because calls" with parents which has increased our communication and have improved our ability to meet families needs.

The Department of Human Services/Shapiro Learning Milestones, Inc.

Learning Milestones is located on the beautiful riverside campus of the Shapiro Center in Kankakee. Learning Milestones is celebrating the completion of its 18th year of service to the Kankakee area.

Learning Milestones continues to provide services for children 6 weeks to 13 years of age. Yearly events have included trips for parents and children to plays and zoo and of course, the yearly visit from Santa.

The before and after school program continues for children ages 6-13. The district busses drop off and pick up directly at the entrance to the day care center, which promotes the safety of the children.

The Center is open Monday – Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturday and Sunday from 6 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Center is

licensed by DCFS to provide extended hours of service (until Midnight) should the need arise.

Dependent Care Assistance Program

State of Illinois employees can pay for the care of their dependent children with tax-free dollars. By using flexible spending accounts, employees can set aside up to \$5000 in annual income for this purpose.

The Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP) continues to demonstrate strong participation since its inception in 1987. In the 2005 fiscal year, 1,389 employees participated in the program and contributions totaled \$5,182,175.

Public Act 87-552

Public Act 87-552 amended the Illinois Personnel Code on July 1, 1992. This Act requires each department to develop a plan of flexible work schedules designed to reduce the need for employees to find childcare outside the home. Each agency is required to file a copy of its plan biennially with the Department of Central Management Services and the Illinois General Assembly.

The 2005 plans from the agencies show that each agency offers flexible work schedules to assist employees in meeting child care needs. The alternative schedules are helping working parents balance the time spent between family and the workplace.

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